

VZCZCXRO4312
OO RUEHAG RUEHROV RUEHSL RUEHSR
DE RUEHFR #0065/01 0211737
ZNY CCCCC ZZH
O 211737Z JAN 10
FM AMEMBASSY PARIS
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 8086
INFO RUCNMEM/EU MEMBER STATES COLLECTIVE IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 PARIS 000065

SIPDIS

DEPT PLEASE PASS OP CENTER TASK FORCE 1

E.O. 12958: DECL: 01/20/2020
TAGS: [PREF](#) [EAID](#) [PHUM](#) [UN](#) [FR](#) [HA](#)
SUBJECT: FRENCH RELIEF EFFORTS IN HAITI - SNAPSHOT: JANUARY
21, 2010

REF: A. A. STATE 4807
[1](#)B. B. STATE 4854
[1](#)C. C. STATE 4909

Classified By: Kathleen Allegrone, Political Minister Counselor, for reasons 1.4 (b and d).

[1](#)1. (SBU) SUMMARY: Responding immediately to the earthquake on January 12, France quickly mobilized physical and financial resources to assist Haitian disaster victims. President Sarkozy convened an inter-ministerial meeting of his Ministers of Foreign Affairs, Interior, Economy, and Defense at the Presidential Palace on January 13 to examine how best to send additional aid to Haiti and has publicly praised the close coordination with the USG ever since. (Note: Details of French aid can be found in para 2-4.) France is a strong supporter of a meeting on Haiti in Montreal scheduled for January 25 which FM Kouchner will attend as well as a subsequent donors' conference that would address Haitian reconstruction. FM Kouchner, who made his career in humanitarian relief, has also put France in the forefront of assisting Haitian orphans. Our interlocutors tell us that groundwork over the past year to link State Operations Center with France's new Crisis Center has paid off in terms of information sharing and coordination. Post will continue to update the Department Task Force on Haiti via email reports of the French contribution to the relief effort. END SUMMARY.

FRENCH CONTRIBUTION TO THE RELIEF EFFORT

[1](#)2. (SBU) The French aid package to Haiti currently stands at 20 million euros (\$30 million), with 10 million euros (\$15 million) channeled through the UN and 2 million euros (\$3 million) to emergency food aid. France will also cancel 54 million euros (\$76 million) in remaining French-owned Haitian debt as agreed in the Paris Club. As of January 21, France increased the total number of emergency personnel, comprised of civilian, military, and gendarmes detachments to over 920 people. Currently, there are 580 Ministry of Interior personnel, 321 military, 9 Department of Health personnel, and 10 MFA agents. Over 130 metric tons of equipment has been delivered to Haiti. Assisted by a civil security helicopter and plane, search and rescue teams have already completed 13 missions and are currently involved in four new intervention sites. Their work has helped rescue 14 survivors buried beneath the rubble. French teams have also accounted for 609 French nationals unharmed and confirmed the deaths of 22 French nationals. An additional 11 French citizens remain missing from the French community of over 1,400 in Haiti. The Ministry of Defense committed one C-130 Hercules and one helicopter to transporting humanitarian cargo and transport evacuees from Haiti to emergency facilities in Martinique and Guadeloupe. As of January 21, the French have evacuated 1,115 people to the West Indies and repatriated 683 French citizens back to France.

13. (SBU) A field hospital and an advanced medical post comprised of 140 staff members and over 39 metric tons of equipment as well as 10 mobile medical teams with over 77 French physicians and 75 nurses are currently working in Port-au-Prince. To date, French medical teams have conducted over 4,000 medical consultations. The French have installed a potable water station with a capacity of producing enough drinking water for 20,000 people daily. Five military aircraft conduct daily rotations between Haiti and the French Antilles, having already delivered over 100 metric tons of food rations, water, and first aid to date. Also working with French NGOs, the government assistance funded an additional 43 humanitarian aid workers and 15 metric tons of equipment, which arrived on January 20. A new detachment of 93 civil security personnel, including 30 military, 45 medical personnel, and 18 gendarmes, arrived in Haiti on January 20. The MFA Crisis Center deployed a team of six consular experts as well as seven agents to manage the international adoption process. In Paris, the Crisis Center leads the French response in Haiti with a staff of 50 agents fully mobilized 24 hours a day. Two special crisis hotlines have been created and dedicated to fielding public inquiries (33.01.4550.3460 and 33.08.1000.6330). Supported by over 150 volunteer staff, the MFA has received over 14,500 calls as of January 21. Note for the State Operations: contacts at the French Crisis Center report productive exchanges with the State Department Operations Center Task Force. Over the past year, the U.S. embassy provided one exchange diplomat to the French crisis center and promoted exchanges with State Ops personnel which appear to have been helpful in coordinating responses to this current crisis.

PARIS 00000065 002 OF 002

14. (SBU) Five planes chartered by the MFA and EU are expected in Port-au-Prince by January 22 with 55 tons of civil security materiel and humanitarian freight prepared by NGOs. Two naval ships are expected to reach Haiti in the coming days to strengthen French capabilities by providing two heavy and two light helicopters, heavy construction machinery, additional vehicles, and 800 metric tons of equipment. An additional detachment of 127 civil security personnel and 21 Department of Health personnel will arrive on January 22, bringing the total French presence to 1,068.

INTERNATIONAL MEETING AND DONORS' CONFERENCE

15. (SBU) In a January 20 interview with RFI, Secretary of State for Cooperation Alain Joyandet, who is leading the French response in Haiti, responded that everyone is naturally associated with the effort when asked whether President Obama failed to mention the European Union or France on purpose when discussing partners for the reconstruction of Haiti. He stressed the goal of the international community as a whole to rebuild Haiti. FM Kouchner stated on January 20 that the international community must give Haitians assurance that we will not abandon them after the emergency phase of humanitarian assistance and repeated the Sarkozy call for a March donor conference, first publicized by the Elysee on January 14.

16. (C) COMMENT: Sarkozy's response to many critical issues is to recommend holding a high-level conference to meet the challenge or solve the problem. Although public reference to a Summit on Haiti assistance has diminished recently it is likely to come up at the Montreal meeting. END COMMENT.

EVACUATING HAITIAN ORPHANS/SUSPENDING DEPORTATIONS

17. (U) FM Bernard Kouchner announced that 130 of 528 Haitian children in the process of being adopted by French families would come to France very soon since the (final immigration) formalities will be greatly expedited.8 Speaking to Parliament on January 19, Kouchner confirmed that

France will repatriate all children who have already been authorized adoptions to French couples, per the instructions of Haitian Prime Minister Bellerive, and will assess where the remaining 398 Haitian children are in the adoption process before repatriation. Kouchner defended the GOF hesitation to immediately evacuate all adopted children from the earthquake wreckage of Haiti, as other European countries have done, out of caution that the children may still have living family members. &Even with the good pretext of saving children (we must not be accused of kidnapping),⁸ Kouchner stated, while promising to prioritize aid to children left homeless. Seven MFA agents are currently managing the nurseries and the government list of adopted children in Haiti. Of the 1,300 Haitians adopted worldwide in 2006, France accounted for 591, making it the most active country in adopting Haitian children in the world. The French Adoption Agency reported that 731 Haitian children were adopted by French couples in 2008. On January 14, Immigration Minister Eric Besson announced that the GOF will temporarily suspend all proceedings aimed at deporting Haitian illegal immigrants in France. On January 18, Besson also stressed the importance of &reuniting Haitian families⁸ through relaxed visa restrictions for Haitians on humanitarian grounds.

18. (C) COMMENT: With the Dutch evacuation of 109 adopted children from Haiti on January 18, Kouchner's cautious response to Parliament likely stems from the sensitive case for France in 2007, when six members of a French aid charity, Zoe's Arc, were convicted of trying to traffic to France 103 Chadian children whom they said were refugees from the war in Darfur. With the Haitian community in France estimated at 45,000, the GOF appears to be making a conscious effort to prioritize the humanitarian response both in Haiti as well as on the home front, where the French public is highly sensitive to the issue of adopting Haitian orphans and providing disaster assistance. END COMMENT.

RIVKIN